

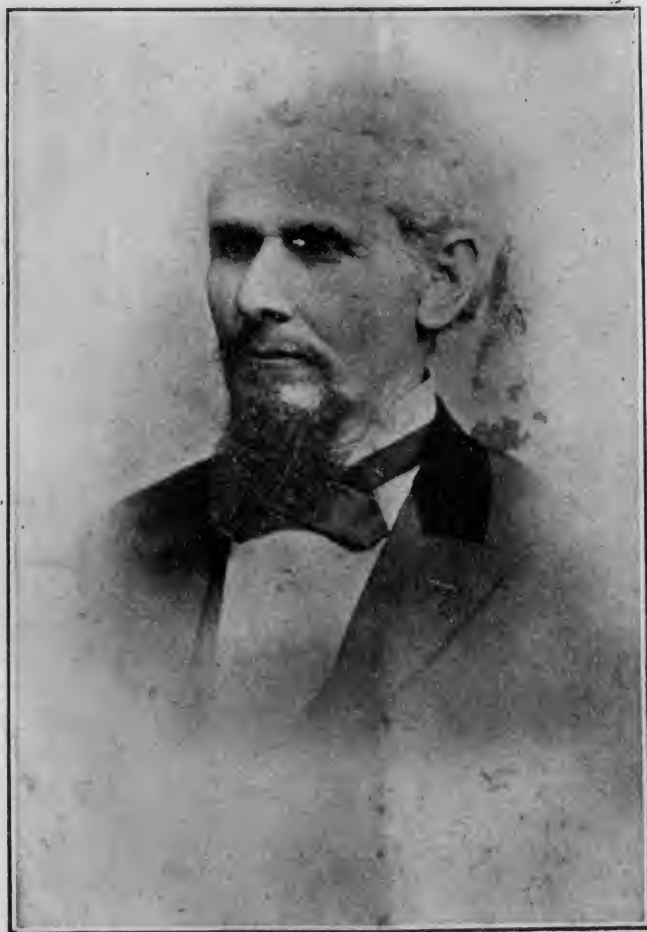
BLUE GRASS BLADE

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT



JUDGE PARISH B. LADD.
Eminent Western Jurist and Freethought Writer.

Judge Parish B. Ladd

Experience is a successful teacher. What is worth having is worth working for and once attained it is capable of furnishing enjoyment. The inheritance of a fortune, not worked for, may bring little joy but entail considerable suffering. A wealth of intellect, aided by ripened, good judgment, makes a man rich, indeed. The youth may use the intellectual foundations afforded him and rear an edifice thereon as high as he is capable of reaching, but he cannot widen the foundations. To build high is the greatest of human aspirations when concerned with intellect and personal character.

It is not saying too much when we apply these glorious traits to the subject of this sketch. Only by diligent labor, the burning of midnight oil, close and persistent study, have the intellectual heights been reached, and it is no glittering flattery bestowed upon Judge Parish B. Ladd, of Alameda, Cal., when we attribute to him such a work, such an experience and such attainments.

Judge Parrish B. Ladd was born in New Hampshire, the offspring of sturdy stock of New England pioneers. Among the hills and dales of that historic spot his boyhood days were spent and here he received the first rudiments of education in the common public schools, such as the day and times afforded. While still in his early youth he left his native State and started out for the boundless, and then almost limitless, West. He reached Cincinnati, Ohio, where he settled for a time and attended the Cincinnati Law College, where he became an ardent and intense student of Blackstone. He stood a splendid examination, graduated, obtained a diploma and commenced the practice of his chosen profession. Imbued with a spirit of adventure, he soon emigrated to Wisconsin, where he again embarked upon the practice of law and later formed a partnership with one of the most widely known and brilliant lawyers of the West. He remained here until the fall of 1862, a day when the nation was in the midst of a seething conflict, and he moved out to the shores of the Golden Slopes and settled down in San Francisco. Wider opportunities were now opened before him and success attended his efforts. He went into Nevada and here he was given the appointment to a Territorial Judgeship under the Federal Government, a position which he filled with marked honor and distinction, an office peculiarly fitted for the man, and his judicial service became a credit to him and a credit to the nation. Serving out his term upon the bench, he now began an experience of travel from which he was able to acquire a store of valuable information.

We now find him in Mexico. Ten months were spent in the Diaz Republic, among the mountains and on the plains, gathering up material for that intellectual edifice he was building. Nearly a year was afterwards spent in the Andes of South America, after which he returned to San Francisco, where he at once opened a law office, went actively into the practice, following his profession with splendid success. Fifteen years ago he retired permanently from business. He established a home in Alameda, one of the most beautiful suburbs of the great Western city, where he still resides and expects to end his days. From his home in the Far West he has sent out valuable messages to

the unterrified hosts of Freethinkers, and from time to time the various Freethought publications of America have eagerly sought the productions of his brain and pen.

During these later years he was favored with access to the immense libraries of San Francisco. He was a frequent attendant thereat. He fairly reveled in the wealth of literature they offered. He did not seek the works of fiction, too frequently presented to the reading public, but his mind turned to the works of history and art, and from these he gleaned that information which has enabled him to construct innumerable articles upon the history of all religions, including Freethought, by way of comparison. The fruition of these labors is to be given to the readers of the Blade, for Judge Ladd has undertaken the preparation of a serial article upon Freethought and Christianity at the counting house, striking up a balance of what they have done for humanity. This is to appear exclusively in the Blade, in accordance with previous announcement, and an intellectual treat is thus offered. The big earthquake and fire, which fell upon that great city, destroyed the library and the books, which deprived him of the opportunity of following up his quest for information, but he had already managed to derive innumerable historical facts concerning the great religions of the world, upon science, history, government, political economy and kindred subjects.

Judge Ladd was fortunate in an inheritance of Freethought views, for his parents were Freethinkers before him. Superstition was not forced upon him in childhood, as is too frequently the case even in these days of progress and enlightenment, and he readily took to Liberal views upon religious matters. On this subject he says of himself:

"I was never able to see anything in any religion but fiction, romance and fraud. To me religion always had a lean dupe at one end, a fat priest at the other. These constitute the only living factors in any and all religions."

The family of Judge Ladd consists of a loved and loving wife, and one son. The latter is a 33d degree Mason and a Freethinker. His wife is a brilliant English and French scholar, and with it she is also an avowed Atheist. Thus is a perfect harmony of thought assured and this family stands but little chance of a rupture because of religious discord.

Judge Ladd is a believer and an admirer of the old philosophy of Greece, the philosophy of the Stoics, modified by the school of Epicurus. Upon this subject Judge Ladd expresses himself as follows:

"Happiness should be the aim and end of life, to attain which Truth, Honesty, Justice and Humanity to all mankind, and no unnecessary harm to any of the living world, should be the motto, the working motto, for every member of society."

No more sublime thought was ever penned and such a philosophy, if properly and universally applied, would be sufficient for all the practical affairs of life. At the same time it contains all that every religion known to man could ever promulgate, as being of value to mankind. Could all men be brought to such a high sense of duty and right what a world we would have!

Striking A Balance Sheet

Freethought and Christianity at the Counting House of Ethics,
Comparing Notes Upon Profit and Loss.

(By Judge Parish B. Ladd.)

It will be my aim in this article to correct the false statements which have so long been floated over the world by an ill-designed priesthood, touching the true ethical status and comparative moral worth of Freethought and Christianity.

Freethought is a derivative. Etymologically, it comes from the untrammelled power of collecting ideas, and may be defined thus:

Reason is the parent of doubt; doubt is the first child of Freethought; Freethought is the highway which leads to religious liberty; which in its turn begets knowledge.

Without religious liberty, and its derivative, man is but a slave to the grovelling passions of a brainless superstition. Freethought dates back to an age when doubt first struggled with falsehood for supremacy. It has no policy; it makes no compromises; it never surrenders, though it may be crushed for a time it will rise again, for its years are imprinted on the starry heavens. Its ships, loaded with truth, float on every sea and anchor in every harbor. Its craftsmen have ever defied the storms of persecution. Its pilots, in their onward course, are steering for the promised land of eternal truth. No wayward breeze nor burning faith has ever baffled the ships' movements.

Freethinkers, like the air we breathe, are bound by no books, no faiths, no theories, no ties of religion. In open field of fair discussion they throw their banners to the breeze, on which are emblazoned in golden letters: "Truth is immortal; all else is fiction."

Freethinkers are humanitarians, wishing the greatest good to all mankind, and no harm to any living creature. Stoicism, modified by Epicurianism, to govern our life, is their standard. Happiness in this world is the end of life. No promised rewards beyond the grave had any value.

Freethinkers, though numerically inferior to the Christians, have led the world at all times, when not crushed by the blind force of religion. These men are our reasoners; they embody the most of the world's intelligence; they are our artists, our writers of science and history and our inventors of useful machinery. In short, they are the only men whose writings are worth reading, while Christians write fiction treatises on the gods and religion. Christians are the exclusive inventors of devices for the torture of unbelievers.

In these assertions I am not unmindful of the fact that we have some works on science, history and other useful subjects, written by men who move under the colors of Christianity. This they use only as a shield to cover their unbelief; to ward off criticism, and so allow their writings a larger circulation; but no genuine believer—devout Christian—ever had the mental capacity to write any book of value, for one who can believe the stuff put forth as the foundation of Christianity, certainly lacks common sense. The church, to foster her selfish ends, has at all times claimed to be the embodiment, the sole depository of all virtue, purity, goodness, humanity and progress, while in truth not one of these claims can she prove to be true. As here used, the words Christianity, church and priesthood

mean one and the same thing, hence will be used indiscriminately.

I have here reached the point where the history of Christianity is in order, from which we shall learn that not one of these boasted virtues of the priesthood are true.

What is Christianity? It is a religious sect, only one among hundreds or thousands of others, many of them dead and gone, others still living; all putting forth substantially the same claim, ordained by one, or more gods. Their sacred writings, when any, are the work of their god or gods, each one claiming to be the only true one, and averring all others to be false; all believe in special providence; all alike resort to prayers for special favors.

Christianity, like all other sects, is the child of superstition. Passion, prejudice and faith are its guides. Reason never enters its life. When one goes into its doors the other departs, for they never have and never can live together. Reason opposes religion, while religion is a stranger to reason.

Christianity fights its adversaries with falsehoods, bribes, forgeries, the sword, fagots and fire and every instrument of torture at its command. In an open field, in argument, it never ventures. The history of Christianity, with its priesthood, is a long one. To do justice to it, volumes would be required. For a magazine article, as here, only a synopsis can be given.

Christianity was born of the most ignorant class, mostly Hebrews. It started as two societies, Therapeuts and Essenes, one near Alexandria in Africa, the other on the borders of the Dead Sea. Both were fully organized one hundred and fifty years before our era; both were extremely pious, claiming to be good, pure, pious men, which, when embodied in one word, was, christ; an adjective, not a man, or proper name. These people were, to a large extent, the followers of Plato's allegorical system—three gods in one and one in three. The two when applied to the one were simply attributes as used by these societies, meaning Jehovah, the Logos, word or wind and salvation. These societies had imbibed much from Orientalism, from the writings ascribed to Zoroaster. About the year 120 of our era, these two societies met and framed a confederacy under the name of Christian, i. e., holy society. To be a worshipper of Jehovah was to this people all there was in goodness; morals cut no figure. Paganism was then used by the Roman philosophers and Freethinkers only as a means of holding in check the passions of the unlettered. The Christians were the lowest of the low, made up as Gibbon says "of beggars, old women, slaves, criminals and mechanics." Mechanics at that time were of the lowest class, totally ignorant. Christians, then, being of the lowest class, were despised by even the common pagans. Thus Christianity starts life at the very bottom of the scale of ignorance, while the Freethinkers, then as now, led all others in intelligence; they were the world's great scholars, writers and thinkers, truly Freethinkers, the only men who are not slaves to superstition, for to be a good writer one must be absolutely free, which no one bound by a creed can be.

The Roman empire at this time, commencing with the Augusti, or the Augustinian era, was at the zenith of her power. It was during this era that all her great writers appear to the world. During this time, and until Constantine turned the empire over to these ignorant Christians, may justly be called the

halcyon days of the Roman world, all except the stupidly ignorant were well to do, happy in their lot, well fed and clothed. Of libraries and schools there were many. Architecture and statuary everywhere, of the purest type. Luxuries in abundance. Post roads of the best type. No higher encomium could be bestowed on any one than to say he was a Roman citizen.

Such was the high order of intelligence, happiness and prosperity of Rome when Constantine divided the empire with his colleagues. With Constantine, as sole emperor, after murdering all who stood in his way of empire, including his wife and family, an era of decline, of learning, progress, virtue and humanity set in which continued under Christian rule to sink lower and lower until Freethought rose, came to the rescue, and drove Christianity from power.

Constantine, born 227 C. E., sole emperor 306 to 337, a believer in no religion, a man of policy only; he wanted soldiers; the Christians would fight for their god, Jehovah, but not for the emperor. Quarrels over doctrinal points everywhere kept the Christians in a state of not only unrest but warfare among themselves, wherein the factions were slaughtering each other. Peace must be restored. The bishops must meet and settle the matter. Constantine saw his opportunity. He called for a council. Three hundred and eighteen bishops, monks from all quarters, mostly from Asia; some from Africa, a few from Europe met at Nice, 325 C. E. This council, after much quarrelling, settled the canon of the New Testament by artifice and fraud, but not as we now have it, for it was tampered with by the church during the Dark Ages. Frauds and forged documents by the church commenced at a very early time, ever since which she has never ceased to resort to forgery when necessary to her end.

Among her numerous forgeries stands that Josephus' mention of Christ; the forged letter of Abgarus to Christ and his answer; the forgeries in the Talmud referring to Christ; the forgery in Tacitus referring to Christ; the forgery in making a donation of Italy's public lands to the church, by Constantine; the forgeries of the Isidorian decretals in fitting up the space by popes from the time of the alleged Peter down to the fifth century. There are only a few of the more important forgeries by the church, for every writing in the New Testament is a forgery, but enough to show the immoral and licentious character of the Christian rulers during the reign of Christianity.

John Tyndal says, in substance: The canon scriptures were made up largely of forgeries and frauds; that when proofs were wanted the forger's hand was always ready. How is this for Christian virtue?

The Crusades.

As the claim of wisdom, purity and humanity are to a limited extent involved in these expeditions, a few words along this line will now be in order.

The first expedition was set on foot by an itinerant monk by the name of Peter. The Christians being very ignorant, intuitionists, and being fired by the eloquence of this monk, rose in a body for the recapture of Jerusalem, the alleged burial place of Christ (a pure myth). All Europe was soon in arms. From 600,000 to 1,000,000, led mostly by their bishops and priests. They placed the figures of a goose and a goat at the head of their armies as emblems; probably the goose was intended to represent the intelligence of the Christians, while the goat represented their power in butting down the walls of Jerusalem. In traversing the countries of Europe, these holy warriors knew neither friend nor foe. Whatever was necessary in their march they forcibly took possession of, killing all who opposed them, including every Jew in sight. When this vast army reached the eastern side of the Bosphorus, starvation stared it in the face. After much suffering and many deaths, the remnant of them

sick and emaciated took up their march through Asia Minor for Jerusalem. All along this route their rear was embarrassed by the Saracens, who killed many of them. Hunger drove them to kill and devour many of their own children, for great numbers of women, girls and children were in the expedition. Antioch being reached, the crusaders laid siege to the city with a force of about 600,000 warriors. At the end of seven months the town surrendered, June 3, 1098. No mercy being shown by these humane Christians, nearly all the inhabitants, men, women and children, were murdered. After satiating their thirst for blood at Antioch, the army renewed its march for Jerusalem, where it sat down for a siege. After much time here spent with no prospect of success, a cry was raised of the find of the true cross. This roused the forlorn spirit of the besiegers to the utmost frenzy, when they pushed on and on July 15, 1099, scaled the walls of the Holy City, whose 100,000 inhabitants then became the prize of these holy warriors. A few made their escape. All others gave up their lives to satiate the spirit of true Christianity. Many of the babes, being transfixed on spears, were carried through the streets, and finally dashed to death against the walls of the city. Just 433 years before this the Saracens captured the city from the Christians. When it surrendered to Omah, he refused to allow his army to enter the city or injure a single Christian. Just 68 years after this Christian capture of Jerusalem and the slaughter of its people, the city was retaken by the Saracens under Saladin. After the surrender not a Christian was injured; the Greeks and Oriental Christians were allowed to remain. All others were given sixty days to prepare for departure, when they were escorted by the Saracen army to places of their choice. These Saracen army officers were Free-thinkers, for such were the civil and military leaders at that time. When this country was the land of colleges, academies and other schools of learning, all presided over by Freethinkers, under whose influence progress, content, happiness, plenty and humanity reigned supreme, while Christian Europe was wallowing in filth, poverty, piety and crime, as will more fully appear later on, when I come to treat of the Inquisition.

These crusading expeditions occupied a period of about 264 years, from 1006 to 1270, C. E. While they have been divided up in eight or ten separate movements, from the first to the last, the movements were hardly broken. After this Saracen period of learning and prosperity under the guidance of liberalism, the country relapsed under the leadership of the orthodox Mohammedans, in the end nearly as low and ignorant as the Christians were at the beginning of the Dark Ages. Nothing is more true than the statement that ignorance and religion, of whatever kind, are fellow travelers.

The Inquisition.

As, with the crusades, I shall confine my inquiries to only such matters as will show the comparative worth of Freethought and Christianity in the settlement of accounts on an ethical basis. To do more would be foreign to my purpose. Besides it would require more time and magazine space than are at my command.

Although the Inquisition had existed in practice so far back as the eighth century, it was not established by decree until the meeting of the Council of Toulouse in 1229. Six years before this an inquisitorial mission was created and put into the hands of the Dominicans. Pietro de Verona was the first to apply the torch. He was assassinated and afterward canonized by the church. From time to time the Inquisition laws were amended, so as to increase the torture, and to authorize the mutilation of the bodies of the dead and the punishment of the servants of the rich. Llorenta, in his "History of the Inquisition," says "The hand of the holy office (Christianity in practice) was outstretched against all. No degree in dignity, in state or church or eminence in art or science, and no purity of life could stand its madness. War was made on books of every kind; 700,000 volumes

were burned in the temple of Serapis at Alexandria, by order of the church, under the Christian Emperor Theodosius." The civil rulers were at that time all under the control of the church, so their acts were the fruits of Christianity, which had no use for intelligence.

Queen Isabella, then on the throne of Spain, was by nature a most kind and humane woman; but under the control of Christianity a devil in female attire. She says: "I have caused great up and give information. All who failed in this were to be treated Llorenta gives the figures of those burned alive and tortured in Spain during the term of his office—"31,912 burned alive, 17,650 imprisoned and tortured." The age at which children could be tried and burned was ten and a half years for boys; nine and a half years for girls. It was made the duty of every one to hunt up and give information. All who failed in this were to be treated as heretics. All suspects were arrested and thrown into loathsome dungeons, where they lay sometimes for years, to be occasionally brought out and tortured for confession or denial. If they confessed they were thrust back into the dungeon to do penance worse than death. Torture was applied to all unwilling witnesses. Heretics could not testify for, but were forced to give evidence against each other. The houses giving shelter to heretics were burned and the inmates arrested. Frederick Barbarossa said the sword had been given him to smite the enemies of Christ. This was but carrying into execution the words put into the mouth of the mythical Christ: "Think not that I have come to bring peace * * * but a sword."

All this devilish torture and death of heretics was none other than the legitimate fruits of biblical Christianity, and thousands more of the same kind, which the church was carrying into execution.

In striking the balance between Freethought and Christianity let us duly consider this piece of evidence. Heretics of both sexes and all ages were outlaws, which applied to their children to the second generation. All who defended heretics were to be treated as heretics, their children disinherited, and their property confiscated. All officials took an oath to use their utmost endeavors to utterly exterminate all unbelievers. These are only a few of the requirements imposed by the church for the extermination of all unbelievers. It is only a wonder that a single person could be found who was not a professed believer in Christianity, for it required a desperate amount of moral courage, with an almost certainty of torture and death, to even doubt the supposed truth of Christianity.

Where then was Freethought and the Freethinkers? Those not murdered were in hiding, or concealing their real opinions under the profession of Christianity. This we shall more fully learn when we come to the revival of learning and its actors. This Christian machinery for making Christians in Spain continued down to near the close of the seventeenth century, when the last act of preserving the faith was carried out by burning alive two heretic scholars.

The Inquisition was finally suppressed by Joseph Bonaparte's army in 1808. Llorenta, the historian, says: "After the hands of Napoleon had been taken off, the institution received in Rome and Madrid, but its teeth were gone and it could do little but show a murderous will." The burning of heretics did not cease until the early part of the nineteenth century. This inquisition was introduced into the Spanish-American colonies, where in Mexico, Carthagen and Lima it rivaled in severity that of Spain. All over Europe this Christian hell was as active as in Spain.

The Jews were marked out everywhere as the special targets of the Inquisition. The priesthood seemed to delight in the torture and slaughter of the despised race. This people being num-

erous in Spain, afforded an opportunity to the special favorite of Jhvh to exhibit their love of humanity. In 1492 all Jews were given four months in which to leave Spain empty handed, accept baptism or suffer death. All Christian Europe shut its doors against them. The Jews could only escape by fleeing to Africa, then under Mohammedan rule. Some of them accepted forced Christianity. Some eight or ten thousand attempted flight. Of this number more than one-half died of privation and hunger before reaching their destination. Some 80,000 bought a stop-over privilege of King Emanuel of Portugal, hoping to earn enough to get over to Africa, after the time given them had elapsed, without their ability to go on. The Christian king, in the tenderness of his bowels, sold into slavery most of the common Jews. Of the others he took all their children under fourteen years of age and put them with the Christian brothers to be brought up in the faith of Christ, while those on whom Christianity was forced, some 200,000, were constantly on the rack of torture.

Without going into details, suffice it to say the rest of Europe fared no better than Spain. Torture and death to all unbelievers was the rule everywhere under Christianity, whose virtues absorb all that is good, pure, useful and humane, say our preachers today from every pulpit. Prof. Huxley says: "If we could only see in one view the torrents of hypocrisy and cruelty, the lies, the slaughter, the violation of every obligation of honesty which have plowed along the course of history of Christian nations, our imagination of hell would pale beside the vision, and the wolf would play the same havoc now if it could only get its blood-stained jaws free from the muzzle imposed by the secular arm." The persecution, torture and slaughter of the Protestants of France, Huguenots as they were called, running over a period of over 200 years, beggars description. The repeated orders from Rome, the center of Christianity, were to slaughter every heretic, even to infants in their mothers' arms. (See my "Priest and Church; What They Have Done for the World," for a more full description of the Huguenot persecution.)

During the Dark Ages when Christianity held all Europe in its deadly grasp, all literature of every kind and all books, except the few made by the church, so far as they could be reached, were destroyed, and every school of learning was closed; the literature of Rome, not secreted, was wiped off the face of the earth. Under Christian rule religion, monasteries, cloisters, monks and dogmas took the place of all else; prayers and images took the place of science and art.

Gallileo, for announcing that the earth revolved on its axis, and copernicus for having announced that our sun was the center of a system around which revolved its planets, were silenced. Bruno, for announcing the plurality of worlds, was, after terrible torture, finally burned at the stake. Vanini, one of Italy's brightest scholars, shared the same fate. Hypatia, one of Alexandria's greatest teachers, was murdered by order of the church. Following this act, Justinian, by order of the church, closed all the philosophical schools of Athens. What has here been said about the doings of the church, the custodian of Christianity, is but an imperfect index of the state of Europe under Christianity. The thousand or more years of the Dark Ages are but the natural fruit of the Christian system. It is Christianity fully ripe. Just what it would be again today if, freed from the secular arm of civil government, which is none other than the work of Freethought, as will more fully appear later on, when I come to treat of the revival of learning, under the title of Renaissance.

Next in order of this series will be the rise of popedom and the strife of the popes among themselves.

Current Comment on Public Events

Is it possible that the Blade has thoughtlessly been guilty of wasting its space?

Is it possible that Messrs. Heald, Hayes and Thorn have deliberately thrown away opportunities for obtaining facts, instead of theories, about the planet Mars?

Had we all known of the matter in time, much patient labor might have been saved, useful brain power diverted to some other and equally important channel, instead of struggling after physical facts to find out by observation and experiment, whether or not Mars has canals or mountains, plains or great seas, men or monkeys.

In a recent issue of the Sunflower, a Spiritualist paper published at Hamburg, N. Y., an alleged medium, whose name is given as "Mrs. Smead," comes out with a message from the ruddy planet, which, though using an alphabet similar to our own, but in construction resembling an admixture of Greek and Latin, showing conclusively, to Spiritualists, that Mars is not only habitable, but actually habited by sentient beings. Mrs. Smead proves this by her own statement that she has been to Mars, in the spirit, and held converse with the Martian people. Of course, the spirit came back to earth and she is able to translate the communication for the benefit of those who may be inclined to believe her story.

To give the fake an appearance of truth it is published under a New York date line, dated August 5. It reads:

"Ti ryre neu infew mare laries en fratur triuen carmie."

The article then goes on to suggest that the reader may not know the language thus employed, and suggests that it is a "sentence from the universal tongue spoken on the planet Mars." Of course, it also stated that the sentence was obtained from a spirit "alleged to communicate" through the personality of the "celebrated Mrs. Smead." The attempt then follows to give a translation of the sentence, (which is interpreted to be as follows:

"The man chief ruler's place in which looks on your earth from Mars."

Honest Injun! But it does look like a case of bunko. People who make profit upon the credulity of the childish and simple, invariably strive to acquire wide advertisement. Nothing is better calculated to offer such means of advertisement than to make preposterous claims of mysticism. Assuming that Mars was inhabited and that the people had a language, it is impossible that they should adopt a system of vowels and consonants similar to our own with which to produce articulate vocabulary. Again, assuming even all this to be true, it is absurd to suppose that a translation could be made, literally, by such means. The Blade has no desire to injure any woman's professional possibilities, but any attempt to make money or profit of any character out of such grossly fraudulent representations is too reprehensible to escape without notice in this day and age of fact.

But this is where the spirit medium has got the bulge on all the Blade writers who have been discussing the condition of the

ruddy planet. Brother Hayes gives an array of facts to support his theories. Brother Heald replies with some more facts to sustain another and different theory. Brother Thorn chips in with his ideas on the same subject, when, could they only have known it, direct information from Mars could have been given them with but little effort by simply communicating with the "celebrated Mrs. Smead."

Ah, me! What errors in judgment we fall heir to through not knowing the precise path to follow! Students of Mars, put aside your telescopes. Stop theorizing! Send the "celebrated Mrs. Smead" a small disk of gold with an eagle engraved thereon by your Uncle Samuel, and you can get all the information you want concerning Mars and its people.

Moses wrote actual history.

Moses is corroborated and Egypt actually suffered seven years of famine, as predicted by Joseph, the male person in the Potiphar scandal.

This is no "goak."

"The patient work of the excavator and the scholarly toil of the decipherer of records on stone and papyrus are slowly but surely revealing the secrets of ancient Egypt."

So writes the London correspondent of the New York Sun, and that newspaper, once the pride of a great journalist, actually plays it up to a finish in an effort to cater to the bible advocates.

The alleged facts that one Brugsch Bey, while digging in the land of the Pharaohs, at Thebes, is reported to have discovered and deciphered a hieroglyphic record tending to prove that the seven years of famine which fell upon Egypt, following seven years of plenty, as related in Genesis, was actually a fact in history, and he undertakes to prove this by a translation of his find, showing that during the seven years mentioned, the Nile failed to overflow its banks and inundate the surrounding country by which means alone the inhabitants thereof were able to produce vegetation.

By looking at the bible record Prof. Brugsch has discovered that this famine is supposed to have occurred about 1700 B. C. It was then an easy matter for him to translate his find and make it read for the same period of time, thereby corroborating the bible. Bible corroboration is thus rendered comparatively easy, but we are prone to ask that if the bible is a record of historical data, compiled under a direct inspiration from the deity, it needs no corroboration, for the truths it contains would thus be made self evident. The very fact that these repeated finds are used to gull the public, unsuspecting, of course, into a belief that bible corroboration is thus offered, indicates a doubt in the mind of the finder and that his conduct becomes necessary to bolster up the work of the almighty.

The trouble is that while the bible story is looked upon as a mere fancy, the translation of Prof. Brugsch will be taken only as a rank fake of the first water. The wonder is that he is unable to appreciate

the fact that he is making himself a laughing stock for the whole world of scholarship. But just as there were fools in the alleged time of Moses, so there will continue to be fools as long as mankind will tolerate such trifling with history.

Failing to give value received for the cash consideration agreed upon, an alleged evangelist, passing current under the cognomen of Rev. John Newton Lyle, operating near New York City, got into a difficulty with the pastors of the neighborhood, who had employed him, with the result that the resident parsons tore down the tent in which he was holding forth nightly and one of the parsons, overseeing the job, was arrested for grand larceny. Hauled before the Harlem police court the feud was renewed and instead of dwelling and working together in unity, for the common cause of graft, there is blood upon the evangelistic moon.

To properly appreciate this incident, our readers must understand that the professional gospel-spouting evangelist first proceeds to lay before resident pastors, the grounds that constitute a necessity for his laboring in that district. Unmindful of the fact that his proposal is an implied criticism of their own work, the evangelist proceeds to point out the advantages to their respective congregations, provided they consent to employ him, and an agreement can be reached concerning the rake-off. But it is also known that the rake-off is a fixture in preaching. Salvation is said to be free, but the preachers must have cash. In some cases a sort of guarantee is given that so many "souls" shall be won to Christ, and the evangelist can usually get out of a tight hole, for if the "sinners" do not "repent" fast enough to enable him to keep up his contract, he hires a few unknown parties to start the conversion racket, and once under way the people are calculated upon to follow in like a flock of sheep. Some such bargain had been made between Evangelist Lyle and the local preachers, but Lyle failed, the preachers were disappointed, and, wishing to cut down expenses by getting rid of Lyle, they took away his tent, left the poles standing, but Lyle worked on without a tent, ignored the preachers, and evangelized on his own hook. Now the preachers are mad clean through, Lyle is on the war path, and the religion of meekness and humility is being demonstrated to the people who do attend by its professors and advocates.

The Blade is gratified that the good work of exposing the shams and frauds of modern Christianity is thus being carried out. It has been well said that when "thieves fall out, honest men will get their dues," and the more the clergy and their allies quarrel over the spoils of evangelizing campaigns, the sooner will the entire system be brought into such public disrepute that it will be no longer tolerated. Sic 'em.

Freethought in Turkey! Well, well! Wonders will never cease!

Mohammedan to the core, and conspicuous for heartless cruelties, Turkey has long been a sore spot on the world's history of progress and development.

True, Christianity cannot be charged up with the offenses committed in the name of Mohammed, but the point we wish to make is that Mohammedanism, like Christianity, is a form of superstition and equally

destructive of the best interests of humanity. Further, it is religion, and as much so as the Christian system. Again, with all the atrocities accredited to the Turkish empire, it cannot and does not exceed the butcheries and horrors committed in the name of Christ.

But to the point in issue.

Munji Bey, the Consul-General of Turkey, is now in New York. He is represented as a man of great force and character, which he must be to be able to hold up Turkey's end in the United States, considering the attitude of Christian Europe towards the Moslem countries. Munji Bey has also given an interview upon the conditions in his country, which appeared in the New York World, in its issue of August 9. One statement in that interview impressed us deeply. He said

"For my part, although I was born of Mohammedan parents, I am a free man, a Freethinker, a Freemason, and my religion is my conscience and my morality. There are thousands in Turkey who think alone the same lines that I do."

Accepting this as being true, we can understand the strength of the reform movement in Turkey. At the same time Russia remains deeply and sincerely Christian. Place Russia and Turkey side by side, cast up their separate accounts, and which is the most degraded, the most brutal, the most debasing and hurtful to the race? Here are two phases of religion. Each may be known by a different name, but in spirit and purpose they are essentially one and the same. Born of Mohammedan parents, but now a Freethinker! Those are startling words to utter in a presumably Christian country. Perceiving the hollowness, the hypocrisy and shams that permeated the Mohammedan faith, and by experience obtaining an insight into the same sins that beset the Christian faith, this eminent Turk, instead of following the course that has been made so popular by Christians, of rejecting his own faith and accepting the Christian superstition, he throws all to the winds, rejects Christianity as well as Mohammedanism, and declares himself to be a Freethinker.

To this growing sentiment of Freethought in Turkey, the Counsel-General attributes its humanizing tendency. Basing his hopes and expectations upon the "thousands" in Turkey who believe as he does concerning religion, he predicts a successful and brilliant future for his native country, and the facts of history offer sufficient justification for his prognostications. Once the beneficent light of Freethought is permitted to enter into the minds of men, they become more human in thought, more human in conduct, and every effort is expended for material improvement instead of seeking to encourage people to wait for a happiness hereafter, which they, by right, ought to enjoy here. Present conditions, as reported in Turkey, suggest that he is correct. The granting of a constitution by the Sultan, the abolition of many Mohammedan forms and ceremonials, the increasing personal liberty, not to men alone, but to women, point to the truth of what this Turkish official has said.

Fearing that he might be misunderstood, misinterpreted and misrepresented, it is said that he expressed the wish that in the publication of the interview he had given, the statement would be made that the new constitution was not built upon the moral or religious ethics of the Koran,

as Christians seek to do regarding their bible, but that it was constructed upon the "known vital interests of the country," and he further insisted that "religion will have nothing to do with the future administration of the law in Turkey."

This is exceptionally cheering news, and we might express the wish that the day, the hour, will soon come when similar conditions will prevail in all so-called Christian countries.

* * * *

"Strange Conduct of Three Pastors Who Vacate Pulpits."

The above is a headline taken from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, of August 9, appearing over a series of short news items relating to the clergy and their doings.

It is significant that a large daily newspaper considers it sufficiently important to chronicle such matters, but it is also indicative of the absolute indifference of the public press concerning the clergy, as a professional religious class.

Upon reading over the items thus given we find that reference is made to Rev. Arthur Gee, of the Arlington Street Baptist church, at Akron, Ohio, who jumped down and out from his pulpit, refusing longer to preach salvation without price, because he objected to preaching for any sect that advanced its cause through the medium of a creed. It must also be observed that Rev. Gee did not insist upon more money being given him, or complain that he did not get what was due him, but he objects to the paying of salaries to preachers, by any church, and denounces the salary system as a curse.

The bible teaches, that is the New Testament portion, that the sincere Christian should "give to every man who asketh of thee," but Rev. H. S. Morrison, pastor of the First Avenue Presbyterian church, at Evansville, Ind., does not believe in following scriptural precepts. The reports say that he was approached by two beggars on the streets of the city named and was asked for alms. Instead of responding, in the fear of the lord, he caused them to be arrested for street begging and hauled before the police court, where they were each fined \$5 and costs. Christian charity is a dangerous article, at best, but the sample shown in this case is entitled to the blue ribbon. And a preacher, too!

Under the same heading the information is given that Mayor F. G. Chapman, of Chester, W. Va., imposed a fine of \$15 and costs, with a jail sentence of five days, against Rev. O. C. Severs, of the same city, who heads a religious denomination known as the Mission Saints. The charge made against him was for boisterous and riotous conduct, and making wanton attacks upon the members of other denominations. He had further denounced the officials of the city as being "corrupt and dishonest" and the Mayor, with the authority vested in him, proceeded as stated. Although the Blade does not approve of such methods being adopted in any effort to restrain the constitutional right of free speech, yet the incident is useful as showing that even preachers must conform to the rules of decorum and right in their public utterances.

* * * *

The growing humanity of the people and their consequent indifference towards religion in general, and the church formulas in particular, has caused such a shaking up of the dry bones of the decadent ortho-

doxy as may never be witnessed again by many now living, unless the curtain is rung down sooner than we anticipate.

Every daily newspaper, of any considerable importance, in the civilized world, is devoting columns of news space and columns of editorial space to information and comment concerning the number of congresses and conventions held, being held, and yet to be held, in the name of some form of or phase of orthodox belief, and these publications, if read, must convince every intelligent mind that there is serious cause for such proceedings.

Never since the advent of Darwinism has the church got such a jolt. To combat the increasing hostility and opposition we have had Pan-Anglican conferences, now a Lambeth conference is in progress in which the Church of England is receiving a sort of overhauling and rejuvenation to meet the pressure of the times, and pope of Rome is preparing for a eucharistic congress to be held in Westminster Cathedral—not the the Abbey, for England would not permit Catholic Christians to desecrate such an edifice—when great pomp and gorgeous ceremonial will be indulged in to attract attention and lead the people to accept a belief in the meek and lowly Nazarene.

But why the necessity of these gatherings? Is not Christianity, in all its forms, a divine institution, founded by divinity, protected by divinity and for divine purposes? If change and revision is aimed at what audacity to correct and revise divine guidance! Besides, would not correction and revision suggest previous errors, and how could divinity err? This action upon the part of the church amounts to a candid confession concerning its human origin, its human construction, and points to the one purpose sought. It is simply to acquire a stronger hold upon the people by bringing divinity to a conformation with human conceptions instead of bringing humanity up to so-called divine pretensions. In other words, it is a lowering of the standard set for divinity without any corresponding gain to humanity. All this pomp and all this ceremony is for the great glory of god and the subjection of the masses. Could the masses only be brought to a realization of this great and important fact, these congresses would never be repeated. In the end it is but a scheme of the clergy to provide ways and means for a preservation of their occupation, for they must realize that the inevitable is about to fall upon them with great force and violence.

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ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Blade will be discontinued at the expiration of the term for which the subscription has been paid up in advance. The address slip on the paper will show subscribers the date of expiration of subscription. Back numbers, or numbers omitted will be sent, if asked for, upon renewal in case of discontinuance.

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THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

Some of the students enrolled in the Correspondence School have not yet procured their text-books.

This should be done at once.

The total cost of the four books comes to \$5.39, which includes postage on one and express charges on the other three.

If students desire to order the books through our office we will do so, provided they send the above amount to us, or we can have all sent to them C. O. D., except the book on Zoology, which will be sent through the mail, postage prepaid.

The books on Geology, Astronomy and Botany are sent by the Macmillan Company, of Chicago. These can be sent by express C. O. D. The book on Zoology is sent by the American Book Company, of Cincinnati. This is sent by mail, and, of course, must be prepaid. The cost of the first three is \$3.28, plus express charges, which will amount to an average of 50 cents, according to distance, and the cost of the latter one is \$1.44, plus 17 cents postage, making a total for the three of \$3.78, for the last one of \$1.61, or a combined total of \$5.39.

We are now getting our mailing list in shape for the distribution of the examination lessons and questions.

These will be in the hands of all students, who have paid tuition fees, before the first day of September. The scholarship certificate will be mailed immediately upon the payment of the \$10 tuition fee.

During the past week three more students have been enrolled and we are satisfied that once the beneficent and educative results can be shown the number of pupils will constantly increase.

Secure the books, if you have not already got them, and be in readiness when the school opens.

In less than two weeks the work will be under way.

FREETHOUGHT PROPAGANDA.

During the process of advocating the principles of Free-thought, opportunities are brought before the editors of our papers, periodicals and magazines for observing what constitutes some of the most pressing needs to keep it at a point of growth and successful strength.

Principal among the needs that suggests itself, from multiplied experiences, is an emergency fund with which to provide a large and increasing number of aged and indigent Freethinkers with the current Freethought literature, and we have enough Freethinkers in this land to provide such a fund which could be drawn upon in the case of actual necessity.

Fraternal bodies furnish homes for their aged and indigent brethren, for the widows and orphans of their deceased brothers, and in this they accomplish a work of real humanity. The same spirit of fraternity should actuate all Freethinkers, for the very principles they cherish imply a liberal fraternity with all mankind.

In the course of the past few months a number of letters have been received by the Blade from aged Freethinkers, who, having given their lives to an open advocacy of our cause, suffered the contumely of their orthodox neighbors, and reduced to poverty in their declining years, are unable to pay the extremely liberal subscription for the paper, and they invariably request that it be discontinued so as to avoid the accumulation of liabilities which they are unable to meet. Not wishing to make any boast of generosity, the Blade can truthfully say that in no instance has it stopped sending the paper for such reasons, but indifferent as to what come of it, the paper has been kept going and will be kept going whether we get pay for it or not. Of course, under such conditions, we have assumed all the burden, all the cost and expense. With a large number of such cases on our hands the burden is getting to be heavier. This could be better borne by the many, and with less inconvenience, than by allowing it to fall upon the shoulders of one.

What can be done? That is the question.

Suppose we have an emergency fund, made up of voluntary contributions from time to time. When renewing it would not be a difficult matter to add an extra 50 cents to be applied to such a fund. All such donations to be

acknowledged in a separate column. This will show the contributors just how much is subscribed. Then, when such a case as we have described, is brought before us, the subscription could be paid for out of this fund and the Blade kept going without any dread or fear of a debt which cannot be met and paid. Such a fund would relieve the Blade of a great strain and act as a sort of reward for faithful service.

We wish our friends to peruse the following letter, which is but a sample of nearly one hundred we receive in the course of a year, and having read it, to express their opinions upon the necessity of such a fund as that we here suggest:

"I regret that I am not able to keep the Blade. Mr. — is a veteran of the rebellion. He is not able to work on account of his heart. His pension of \$15 per month, our only income, and rent to pay. Gladly would I give a fortune if I had it to help break down superstition. It has ruined my home. I worked at day's work; anything to earn an honest dollar to educate, feed and clothe my four children. The oldest was drowned twenty-one years ago. A church member came to me with "Now — has gone to hell; you better get religion before you go." I told her and others what I thought. I did not intend to say this but you will know how I feel. I could write all day on this subject. I enclose 5 cents for the papers so far this month."

Name and address omitted for personal reasons.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH.

The Blade does not approve of wilfully and intentionally placing one's head in the lion's mouth, nor does it advocate a policy of peace at any price.

Where individual rights are denied, when law and constitution are ruthlessly violated by corrupt officials, it is ready to raise its voice in protest, but it would eternally advise against deliberately seeking to stir up strife for the mere purpose of obtaining notoriety. In the advocacy of a given cause it is a wise policy that will cause action after due deliberation and discrimination. Neither have public officials any right to discriminate against any class of citizens in seeking to enforce the laws and winking the other eye when another and different class of citizens openly violate it.

These thoughts are wrought by the fact that in the city of Los Angeles, four splendid women of liberal and advanced thought, have accepted incarceration in the city jail as a means of defending their rights under the law. It is made to appear that the city authorities had readily and freely granted permission to innumerable religious bodies to conduct public meetings on the streets, during hours when business was at its height and in places where business transactions are more numerous. Later, these women, moved by the imprisonment of some of their brethren, applied for, and were refused, the privilege of

holding street meetings, whereat to advocate Socialism and freedom of thought, but, in spite of denials and refusals, they held the meetings, after serving notice to that effect upon the authorities; were promptly arrested, thrown into jail and ordered to be held there for more than THREE MONTHS awaiting trial. Now jail squads are being organized under the Socialist leaders, to be composed of men and women who are willing to suffer the same penalty in an effort to convince the authorities of their grievous mistake by filling the jail to overflowing with martyrs to the cause of the right to free, public speech.

The constitution and laws of most of the States, and the Blade does not doubt that the constitution and law of California contains similar clauses, provide that any person accused of an offense shall be entitled to a speedy trial. These women were lodged in jail on the 7th day of July and the magistrate before whom they were taken, evidently a tool in the hands of their enemies, set their cases for trial between October 10 and 30, more than three months after their arrest and the charge being made against them. It is said that the judges intend to be on a vacation during July and August, and that this is one reason why the trials are deferred to such a late date. We do not doubt that the laws of California are similar to the laws of other States and provide that when, for any reason, the judge of a given court is unable to act, then the judge of another court of equal jurisdiction shall be authorized to try the case in the event of necessity. But even this is denied to these California women, and Los Angeles goes on record as being unjust, tyrannical, scheming, plotting and revengeful in its attitude toward those with whom the officials do not agree. In other words, these women are denied their right to a speedy trial. They are practically deprived of their freedom without due process of law. Although they are made martyrs, they are willing martyrs and will be satisfied, if by their term in jail, they can win freedom of public speech for their brothers and sisters.

This is a blot on the escutcheon of American liberty. It is trampling the Constitution in the dust. It is enough to make the eagle shed its feathers, deprive itself of its plumage and hide its head in shame. It is a disgrace to civilization. It is an insult to intelligence. Let us express the hope that some good will come from such a proceeding, or else will the heroic martyrdom of these women have been in vain.

With it all the women do not appear to be depressed. They bear their punishment with bravery and fortitude. Since being in jail they have issued cards of invitation, which should inflict humility and chagrin upon their persecutors.

The greater the absurdity in religion, the more faith is required for its acceptance; the greater the faith the nearer heaven. Why not pronounce the whole system a monstrous absurdity and be done with it?

RELIGION AND POPULATION.

One of the necessary outgrowths of grinding poverty among the masses has been a tendency to restrict the population.

Aside from individual effort in this direction, institutions have been formed for the promulgation of a scientific method to limit the growth of population, as a means of decreasing the demand constantly being made upon the means of subsistence. A brutal competitive system is largely responsible for the conditions thus obtaining but in the end the church must shoulder a large share of this responsibility in that it has been ever a faithful and constant ally of predatory wealth, fostering and encouraging the centralization of wealth and political power to subserve its own selfish ends.

Unsuccessful institutions, whether in religion or politics, can invariably manage to invent a plausible excuse as being explanatory of the failure of its mission. So it is with the church. Failing to grasp the true science of human society and development, it has gone the wrong way and must, under the law of adequate compensation in nature, suffer the consequence of its acts.

France, probably, offers the most acute phase of this decline in population. In certain sections of American social life similar conditions prevail. It has been made a matter of public comment that in New York City, where the fabulously rich dwell, the laugh, or the cry, of a little child is seldom heard. On the other hand, in the tenement districts there may be found an abundance of children. But what is the cause of all this? Many eminent writers insist that reproduction is only limited in cases where prospective parents incline to a life of personal ease, comfort and fine adornment. Such do not care to be burdened with the rearing and training of offspring. On the other hand, church writers now maintain that it is the effect of a discarding of Christian principles, and one of them, writing in the "Official" of Paris, urges that the depopulation of France is wholly due to the de-Christianization. The same writer argues, by implication, that a return to Christianity will insure an increase in the birth rate, with a corresponding gain in population.

Did the church ever stop to think that under Christian influences nine-tenths of the human family was born in pain, agony, dread and misgiving? The majority of babes came into the world unwelcomed by its parents, upon whom the burden and the struggle fell, but priests and kings encouraged the system because every child added to those already in existence, meant another tithe payer, another producer, another worker, upon whom both could draw for their support. The increase in population, even in America, aside from immigration, comes not from the rich but from the poor, and the very conditions that now bid fair to destroy the existing systems of centralizing wealth and power must also engulf the church and in the

further change to come the church will be carried down to total and permanent destruction in the vortex.

Scientifically considered, the church writers have got the cart in front of the horse. The de-Christianization of France was not the work of one day. It required years, generations to produce it. While this was growing upon the people, they were also thinking, and in the reaction that took place, economic, as well as religious conditions, were gone into. As a matter of fact, the people began to realize that the doctrine of being fruitful and multiplying was invented by cunning priests and rulers, men who wished to control and direct the material and spiritual welfare of all the people. Religious considerations cast aside, the people had time to think. Serious reflection upon economic questions caused a change in the attitude of the people toward the church, and while depopulation and de-Christianization have gone hand in hand, they are concomitant effects of the same causes, and do not occupy the relation to each other of cause and effect. A return to Christianity would not insure an increase in population, with the present mental attitude of the French people. This may be demonstrated from the rich classes of America. With but few exceptions the owners of great wealth in our own country are patrons of and attendants upon church. Whether they really believe in the doctrines taught and promulgated by the church is, perhaps, an open question, but in any event they profess it. Then, if de-Christianization be the cause of depopulation in France, why is there not a larger birth rate among the rich in America?

The sad truth is that religion has nothing to do with population, other than to degrade and depress it. Religion has done more to reduce the population of every country in Europe than all other influences combined. Similar conditions would prevail in America were the church capable of exercising the same degree of power, but, fortunately, the great majority of the American people are either indifferent or openly in opposition to the church.

THE STATE AS A MORAL TEACHER.

It seems to be utterly impossible to get the advocates of Christian theology and biblical ethics to separate morality from religion.

Morality has been well defined as the "greatest possible happiness to the greatest possible numbers."

The only definition that can conscientiously be given to religion, as it is commonly understood and accepted, is that it implies the worship of the supernatural to the detriment of that which is natural.

Considering such a worship as being detrimental to that which is natural, it is not possible that it could tend to the creation and promotion of human happiness to the few, much less to the greatest possible numbers. We may

concede, however, that some inferior creatures may find what they are pleased to construe as happiness in what they denominate religion, but it is a condition of misery after all, superinduced by the doubt and dread of the future. Happiness if absolute knowledge could be given or obtained concerning future bliss, but torment unspeakable if assured of the only other alternative offered.

At a recent meeting of the National Education Association, held in the city of Cleveland, the speakers attending thereat, and the newspaper comments made upon what was reported therefrom, all point to the conclusion that none of them were able to distinguish what may be called moral teaching from religious teaching. All combined appear to regard morality and religion as synonyms, or one and the same. The Interior, published at Chicago, dealing with this issue, as emanating from the Cleveland meeting, says:

"We hope for such a change of public sentiment as will permit and encourage the reading and study of the English bible. The introduction of moral teaching into the public school, with the bible as at least one recognized text-book thereof, would, if sincerely managed, not offend the proper principles of religious liberty in the slightest. The right of the state to teach morals in the public schools, wholly or partly on the basis of biblical ethics, is, at bottom the right of self-preservation, because moral nations live."

The whole trend of the quotation above made is to so combine moral with religious teaching as to make them appear one and the same. The author is unable to perceive of any moral system apart from religion. His only notion of "religious liberty" is that liberty which permits and authorizes religious instruction being given to all children in the public schools, but no liberty must be accorded those who do not want such religious instruction, a one-sided liberty at best. The only safe course and one that will guarantee religious liberty to all is to refuse to give any religious instruction of any character and absolutely bar the bible from the schools altogether.

True, indeed, the method of instruction at present obtaining in our public schools is inefficient. The state does not teach the wrong of a selfish act. It does not teach the wrong of an evil act. Each and every state should and by right ought to instruct all its public school children in the fundamentals of social morality, leaving religion to be made a matter of personal desire. The State's self-interest should induce it to teach that we should avoid the commission of wrong because it is injurious, if not to ourselves, then to others. It should also teach that we ever strive to do that which is admitted to be good because of the joy arising from the consciousness of a human duty done. To base such moral teaching upon "biblical ethics" would mean to emphasize the doctrine of rewards and punishments as the motives for doing right and avoiding wrong. This is selfishness pure and simple, and any system of education based upon such considerations must be inherently false, dangerous and highly immoral. Wrong deeds tend to disintegrate society. Right deeds will con-

solidate, protect and perpetuate society. The state must take cognizance of these sociological facts. Hence, for a proper instruction concerning the right and wrong of human conduct, neither bible nor religion becomes at all necessary, but are actual and positive stumbling blocks in proper moral instruction.

Reference is made to the enactment of 1787, now more than one hundred and twenty years ago, which read:

"Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary for good government, schools and the means of education shall be forever maintained."

Well meant in that day and age, as far as its authors could then see, but the age has outgrown the religious end of it. Morality and knowledge has been, is now, and forever will be, essential to good government, but history reveals the painful fact that wherever and whenever religion had anything to do with the government, untold misery followed, crime flourished, disease went unchecked, and the race going headlong to destruction. Our forefathers of a century ago could not see quite as far as we are capable of seeing today. Just as we have outgrown and discarded their fashions in dress, so have we outgrown their notions concerning religion. We now know that religion is positively injurious and in the certain light of history, guided by a desire to steer clear of entangling alliances between education and religion, the Blade proposes to wage an unrelentless crusade against any and all religious instruction in our public schools, no matter in what guise its advocates may seek to offer it.

Slight changes have been made in the form of the program for the convention of the Materialist Association at Canal Dover, Ohio, September 7 and 8. A glance at the revision made will show the list of speakers booked for the occasion, and as all will be in attendance upon the convention of the Buckeye Secular Union, the indications point to a big revival of Freethought in the Buckeye State. We need similar conventions in other States. Why not make an effort to get up one? If not this year, go after it next year.

Owing to a congestion of type, caused by a series of articles longer than usual, a number of letters from our friends had to be omitted from our last issue. The letters were put into type but had to lay over. They will all be printed in due time. The Blade is pleased to receive and publish these letters, as they show to other Freethinkers who can be counted in the army of progress.

Full and complete reports of the conventions at Canal Dover will be published in the Blade. Extra copies of these issues will be printed for distribution, and if you want others to know what Freethinkers are doing, orders for extra copies should be sent in at once.

Rally 'Round the Flag

**Freethought Banners Will Proudly Wave
at the Canal Dover Conventions,
and Some Reasons Why You
Should Be There.**

(By Dr. J. B. Wilson.)

The coming meeting of the Buckeye Secular Union and National Materialist Association, at Canal Dover, on September 6th, ought to be largely attended, especially by Liberals in Central Ohio. State Associations, I believe to be vastly of more importance than National Associations. Liberals, as a rule, cannot afford to travel at great distances, consequently, no very great assemblage can be expected to be drawn together in national conventions.

Each State can, however, maintain a good working organization. All that is required is the impetus and enthusiasm. Let Ohio set the practical example, and soon other States will fall in line. When ten or more States have likewise established a practical and effective organization, then a foundation will be laid, upon which it may be possible to base a national organization. Heretofore, for several and divers reasons, national organizations which started have failed. Jealousy, selfishness, incapacity and illiberality are a few of those reasons, but the expense of travel was also a great drawback. Large attendance gives dignity and importance, and are essential to command press notice. Our importance is always estimated by the showing we make.

Now, it seems to me, that Liberals ought to be able to travel to the center of their States, and can afford an outing for two or three days. All we need is to make the start. We should look forward to this occasion and save and prepare for it. When once we have started, and have experienced the pleasure of these meetings, and realized their importance and good, we will want to go every year. Liberals, I think, are naturally fond of each other. Owing to the persecution out-spoken Liberals have suffered, they are bound together by stronger links of sympathy than most people. But it is not only unfortunate but sad that we, who know each other well, by means of the press and correspondence, and who appreciate each other, never meet to clasp each other's hands and feel that sympathy that can only come by social contact.

Now, here is our chance. The Buckeye Secular Union offers it to us. It meets at Canal Dover, September 6. Canal Dover is the home of Brother Samuel Toomey, who makes the finest trotting sulky in the world. Brother Toomey treks with dead-game sports. With all those fanciers of horseflesh that has "go" in them, the name of Toomey is a household word. No great driver will sit in a sulky that has not the name of Toomey on it. Brother Toomey will welcome us. He has long been known and honored in the world of Freethought, and it is fitting that this meeting take place at the home of one of the Union's oldest and most zealous members.

The Buckeye Secular Union has been in existence for some years, and has been chiefly maintained by George O. Roberts, notary-public of Dennison, Ohio, and the

secretary, Miss Lou Lawrence, and others not so well known to Blade readers. Heretofore, the meetings have been held in parlors, but now they have advanced to an opera house. For the faithful work of these tireless few too much credit cannot be given. While we in the cities, who pretend to be somebody in particular, have been idling and wind-jamming, these persistent workers up in the woods have effected an organization which has attracted attention to themselves. I believe it is going to grow, and I for one am going up to "jine" it, and hope others, who have been as tardy as myself, will follow suit.

Last year the Union met at the home of Helen M. Lucas, in Marietta. Mrs. Lucas is "The Grand Old Liberal Woman" of Ohio. She has certainly the staying qualities. Lou Lawrence is too young to be classed as above, but she is a brilliant woman, and a grand worker, all the same. Dr. Bowles was enthusiastic over the Marietta meeting last year, declaring it to be the finest Liberal meeting he had ever attended. His prospects are bright for a still better one this year, so let everybody turn in and turn out to it.

Three of our finest orators will be there, and that ought to bring many. I mean Dr. T. J. Bowles, the Nestor of Hoosier Liberalism; T. J. Wyscarver, of Cincinnati, once famous as a platform lecturer, and John R. Charlesworth, matchless in logic, eloquence and repartee. These alone will surely be worth coming to hear.

Then there will be Eliza Mowry Bliven, of the Materialist Association, who has endeared herself to Freethought everywhere. Last and not least, there is old Wettstein. He is the one man I want most to meet, and I think I'll give him a good cussin' when I do meet him. I have been reading after him for a long number of years, and invariably he knocks by theological ten pins down as fast as I can set them up.

The Resurrection Myth

**Makers and Expounders of the Christian
Doctrines Subjected to Merited
Criticism and Rebuke.**

(By T. S. Givan.)

(Concluded from last week.)

He walked and talked with Simon and Cleopas, but being "in another form" they knew him not for many hours, finally recognized him, he "vanished out of their sight."—Luke 24, Mark 16.

It Was the Same Body—"Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

To Keep the Disciples from Stealing His Body—"The chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, 'Sir, we remember that the deceiver said, while he was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day,

I am an immortalist. I want and hope to live again. It is to us more wonderful to live again. It is no more wonderful this world is so beautiful, and there is so much yet to be known, that I don't want to be snuffed out. In my opinion, nature will show neither good sense nor good taste in dumping me, or any other hopeful, progressive creature, into nothingness. So, with Plato, I am inclined to say, "It must be so; else, why this pleasing hope, this fond desire, this longing after immortality." Besides, my affections govern me considerably.

Well, it has always so happened, that just above the time when this "pleasing hope" gets well fixed in my mind, I run across something from Wettstein that knocks all my arguments, as well as hopes, silly; and many a time I've gotten so riled that I have said to myself, "Damn that Dutchman!" And if he don't look too formidable I think I'll say to his face what I've said many a time to his back. What is most vexing about him is that he won't leave a fellow a single argument. I have either got to dump Agnosticism or quit reading him.

Well, this letter has grown to a weary length, and I had only intended to write a short appeal for attendance at the Union. I will close by saying that I am informed by Roberts that there will be a Mourners' Bench set up in the Holy of Holies for all those Ohio liberals who, like myself, have known of the Buckeye Secular Union and who have not had enough of Liberal enthusiasm and State pride to join it; and here I hope to meet all the cooled-off, the back-slidden and repentant.

Come out, everybody. Let us be a help and encouragement to those who have worked so hard and so long to keep alive Liberal enthusiasm and organization in Ohio. Let us expand and grow until Liberal eyes all over the country will be directed toward Ohio—Ohio! Mother of Presidents (symptoms of a mishap this time, though)! Ohio! Greatest State in the Union! In the very nature of things she should be greatest in Freethought—the very heart and soul of Liberalism. Let us make her so.

lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, "He is risen from the dead.""

Hired to Say the Disciples Stole the Body—"When the chief priests were assembled with the elders and had taken counsel, they gave large sums of money to the soldiers, saying, 'Say ye: His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept.' They took the money and did as we taught them, and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."

Jesus Had Come Forth—"Some of the soldiers, who had guarded the tomb, said: 'An angel rolled the stone away from the sepulchre and Jesus had come forth.'"

Soldiers Took Away the Body—"But Annas and Caiaphas comforted him saying: 'Why should we believe the soldiers who guarded the sepulchre of Jesus, in telling us that an angel rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? Perhaps

his own disciples told them this, and gave them money that they should say so, and they, the soldiers themselves, took away the body of Jesus. Besides, consider this, they also took a large sum of us and declared according to the instructions which we gave them."—Ap. New Testament, Nicodemus x, 28-30.

Remembered What They Never Knew—"Why seek ye the living among the dead? Remember how he spake unto you saying, 'The son of man must be crucified, and the third day rise again.' And they remembered his words."—Luke 24.

"For as yet they know not the scripture that he must rise again from the dead."—John 20.

The Dead Jesus as Host at a Fish Fry—"After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise Simon Peter saith unto them, 'I go a fishing.' They say unto him, 'We also go with thee.' They went forth and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, 'Children, have ye any meat?' They answered him, 'No.' And he said unto them, 'Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find.' They cast and were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. As soon then as they were come to land they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, 'Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.' Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Jesus saith unto them, 'Come and dine.' And none of the disciples durst ask him, 'Who art thou?' knowing that it was the lord. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."—John 21.

Who Told That He Was Resurrected—"The angel," Matt. 28; "a young man," Mark 16; "two men," Luke 24; "two angels," John 20.

"The earliest Christians were absolutely certain that the body of Jesus, after the resurrection, was the same body of Jesus as they had known before."—Rev. R. J. Campbell, in *The New Theology*.

Had it been the same body his close friends would have known him. Mary saw him and talked with him, but thought he was a gardener, and Simon and Cleopas walked and talked with him and did not know him because he had not the same body but was "in another form," and "vanished out of sight." Paul says: "I delivered to you what I received. How Jesus died for us, was buried, rose again, was seen of Cleopas, of the twelve, of above 500 at once, of James, all the apostles and me." This was the tale as told by Paul but he tells you that he did not see Jesus at all. He only "saw a light and heard a voice, but saw no man,"—Acts 9, and vigorously asserts that it was not the same body: "Thou fool; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of god." Not a solitary witness said he or she

even believed they had seen the same body, much less than being absolutely certain of it. One who claims to have been an eye-witness to the crucifixion claims that he helped to carry Jesus from the cross, that he was not dead; was revived, and died years later near the Dead Sea.

"It is no more difficult to believe in the reanimation of a physical body (the resurrection of a thoroughly dead human body) than in any other fact of consciousness."—R. J. Campbell in *The New Theology*.

It is decidedly more difficult to believe in that which is contrary to the order and operations of universal nature, unobserved and unknown in all human experience, and utterly inconceivable to human intelligence than that which you have actually seen and touched and known by human consciousness as real facts. The latter compels belief, the former suggests doubt.

But this is as much space as we can devote to these contradictory and preposterous statements.

It is thoroughly clear to every unfettered, intelligent mind that there is not one iota of truth in the whole matter contended for, and that Jesus did not die for us nor save us, as they assert, for we have to die and to save ourselves from whatever we can or should be saved, just the same as if he had neither lived nor died.

Christianity, therefore, stands alone upon these admitted fraudulent assertions—that Jesus, after having been dead three days, arose again in the same body that had been mutilated upon the cross and coagulated in death—absolute and actual death—and in that same body rejoined his friends, showed them the wounds, the flesh and bones to assure them it was the same body; went about eating and acting as other men; entertained his friends at a famous fish fry, making the fire, broiling the fish, breaking the bread, and in the same body went to heaven, sat down, there sitteth, and will continue to sit until the last day!

Not only is this impossible of being true, as demonstrated by the order and operations of universal nature for thousands of years, without a single variation favorable to these tales—every instance, everywhere and at all times proving them utterly false—but their authors have declared them untrue, and have given their reasons for inventing them.

Upon this Count Tolstoi, the world-famous Russian author, says:

"Religion is truth and goodness; the church, falsehood and evil. I tell you frankly I cannot agree with those who believe the church is an organization indispensable to religion. The church has ever been a cruel and lying institution, which, in seeking for temporal advantages, has perverted and distorted the true Christian doctrines. Christianity has ever been simply a pretext for the church (which is but an organized trust for exploitation). I may be told that there have been and still are in the Catholic world men and women of holy life, but I answer that these sainted lives are not due to the church, but rather in spite of the church."

These men organized the most powerful and the most tyrannous trust ever known upon earth. It made the highest claims to honesty, of being the sole owner of the best and most needed things of all well-being, and pretended alone to do good. Nevertheless the only good ever wrought in its name was by its deceived victims, who

were good before becoming members and who continued to do good as best they could under and in spite of its fettering and blighting conditions. It assumed to be helpful and merciful, and cloaked its hideous and hellish designs with the beautiful handiwork and graces of religion. It was a conspiracy of bad men to become royal princes and regal rulers, at all hazards—by the sweetest of words or the deadliest strokes of the sword. They arrayed themselves in the graces of heaven, as high priests of the most high god, pretending to control god's mercy and loving favor, in order to inaugurate this trust, like the libertine allures his trusting victim. It commercialized the holiest sentiments of the human heart, everything desirable in life, and assumed and asserted that:

All mankind are under the wrath and curse of god, predestined to hell, with no possible escape therefrom except alone upon its terms.

It is the sole owner of salvation.

It alone can grant the right of marriage. There is neither decency, purity, marriage, lawful children, or possible human salvation, except alone upon its terms.

It can annul all governments, depose kings, and utterly destroy all rulers and peoples who may not comply with its demands.

It even denies you the right of private judgment in love and religion, makes you acknowledge its supreme authority over you and your unborn children, confess to it the most cherished thoughts of your life, and gives you nothing else for your heaven-given rights and hard-earned money but lurid lies or bloody blows! Its every cardinal claim is a palpable, provable falsehood, and its teachings are from the most flagrant and shocking to most alluring and fragrant of all human lies. In order to have this trust absolutely effective among all, ignorant and intelligent, they formulated "a plan of salvation"—a tale which you must believe or be damned," and purposely made that tale so false that intelligent beings could not believe it, so they could have them convicted of heresy, killed and their property confiscated. It has befouled the world with its lies and crimes, and excelled all other evils in causing ignorance, destitution, wars and death, having put to death more than five hundred millions of human beings to gain and enforce its supremacy.

All of these are grave accusations; but I say to you, in the interest of the countless, helpless little children of the world, and the good men and women of all lands, that every one is susceptible to clear proof to all intelligent minds, and that something ought to be done toward teaching the plain, clear, sweet truth of right living, instead of these terrifying falsehoods. I challenge the reasonable refutation of a single statement I have herein made. It forces from its own best servitors exorbitant tributes, from the cradle to the grave, and its grimy and goulsh hands have desecrated even the graves and cast out thousands of beloved human bones from their sacred and silent burial places, solely because more money was not given to its sordid hoardings for more power.

If these people could be induced to become teachers of truth and kindness, how much better and brighter the world would be!

The Blade's Correspondence

Patches for the Mind.

DELHI, N. Y.—I have received a few sample copies of your valuable paper. You will find enclosed the material to put me ahead one year on your list of subscribers. It is good to know there are people like N. F. Griswold, who are willing to give of their means to keep up the Freethought movement. And for myself, I never have had the opportunity to do for a good, true cause like Mr. Griswold and others, but will send my little, even at the expense of a few more patches to my clothes, incidentally adding some more sound patches to my mind. But as a rule we find patch work does not appeal to popular taste, and far less does it appeal to that class of individuals who display their worn and tattered minds to their sympathizers, holding out their divine (?) hands for charity's sake, to keep fine clothes on their bodies, while they make ragged minds for our children, incidentally demanding and getting government protection for their wealth; giving nothing in return for that protection, and through their paid advocates wreak their petty vengeance on all of those who question the truth and justness of their claims. And while we continue to add more sound patches to our minds we know by experience that those who are devising ways to give nothing for something will try to add more patches to our clothes.—WARREN S. DEAN.

Well Pleased With the Blade.

MANCHESTER, N. H.—Through the courtesy of that stalwart humanitarian, Franklin H. Heald, of Los Angeles, Cal., we have been privileged to peruse a few copies of your very interesting paper. You can count on a subscription from us as long as we can furnish the "long green" to pay therefor. I am glad to notice your call for speakers at funerals of Freethinkers. The lying swash of sky-pilots as the "last tribute of respect" ought to be abolished. It is altogether out of place, and I deny the moral right of the living to thus insult the corpses of our Freethinking friends. It is the meanest and most cowardly of all dastardly acts on the part of the living to take such vile advantage of persons after they are dead, and I am loth to believe that any self-respecting preacher, would occupy such a position. You may place my name on the list as one willing to conduct Rationalistic services on funeral occasions for Freethinkers. Terms: expenses and entertainment. Would gladly pay these myself if justice to family would warrant it.—JOHN P. THORNDYKE.

Heald's Loss Is Our Gain.

CHICAGO, ILL.—I was sorry to learn of the suspension of Higher Science, but perhaps Brother Heald's loss will be your gain, and as long as it's in the family of the Freethinkers we can congratulate ourselves that it's not any worse for the cause. Brother Heald has been a valiant fighter.

He is not a "dead one" yet and I'm glad we are to hear from him occasionally in the columns of the Blade. I have forgotten how long I was paid up to with Higher Science, so I'll thank you to inform me by enclosed envelope. Also please change my address. While passing I want to congratulate you upon the great improvement in the Blade all round. It seems to me to be broader in its views and more tolerant of those who differ from it in the great phases of Freethought. On economics it seems to be about right. Kidder's "Reply to the Unquiet Hosts" should be put into a little pamphlet, small enough to go into a letter. If you conclude to make a leaflet of it you may send me 100 copies, with bill. I am glad to see that Mrs. Henry and Mrs. Closs are still on your staff of writers. There are none better in the world. Mrs. Henry's "little journey" to the home of Mrs. Closs, which appeared in the Blade is a classic, and I value it very highly. Let the good work proceed. Wishing you all success I am, cordially yours—GEORGE B. WHEELER.

A Splendid Suggestion.

MUNCIE, IND.—I enclose \$1.00 for continuance of the blade; I also enclose \$1.00 for nondescript friend, Dr. William Smith, to whom you will also continue to send the Blade. I am looking forward to the 5th and 6th of September in high hopes of grasping the hand of a large number of free men and free women in Canal Dover. If the friends of the Blade will do their duty the circulation ought to reach at least twenty thousand during the current year, and as soliciting new subscribers costs but little time, and no money, I sincerely hope that every friend of the Blade will secure at least twenty new subscribers before the close of the present year.—T. J. BOWLES, M. D.

From an Old Wheel-Horse.

KANSAS CITY.—I enclose \$1.50 for renewal. Take about all the Freethought publications and sometimes I have time to read them and sometimes I have not. I very much like the tone of the Blade since Charlesworth took hold and deals out those sledge-hammer blows on the pates of the d-d clergy and the sanctified idiots. Am on the road most of the time contracting for the company I have been with for some years, and it is to be deplored what a crowd of d-d fools this country is populated with. I like the "Appeal to Reason" for a straight out economic paper. They surely show up the gang of cutthroats, thieves and scoundrels who have the body politic by the nap of the neck. I wish you all success.—GEORGE E. LIGHT.

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